(b) whether upgradation facility is not extended despite seats being vacant in upper class and these seats go remaining vacant;

(c) whether upgradation facility will be restored by Government; and

(d) if so, the time when it will be restored?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) These are commercial decisions of the airline, which are taken considering the product and facilities offered by the competitors.

Air services in North India and East India

2331. SHRI SABIR ALI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the areas in the North India and East India where air services are inadequate or deficient;

(b) the reasons for the same;

(c) the demands made by various quarters in the matter; and

(d) the steps being taken to solve the problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) All the operational airports in the North and Eastern India are air linked with the scheduled air services.

(c) and (d) Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued Civil Aviation Requirements for scheduled regional air transport service with a view to promote air connectivity within a region, expand air travel services for Tier II and Tier III cities and between specific regions. There are four regions identified as North, South, West, East/North-East coinciding with the Flight Information Regions (FIRs) as defined by the Airports Authority of India (AAI).

The Government has issued initial No Objection Certificate (NOC) to operate Scheduled Air Transport (Regional) Services to M/s. Jagson Airlines and M/s. MDLR Airlines for Northern Region and M/s. Zav Airways for North East/Eastern Region. Out of these M/s. MDLR Airlines commenced its operations in year 2008.

Incidents of bird hits at Delhi airport

2332. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the cases of bird hits of civilian aircrafts near the airports particularly at the Delhi Airport have increased in the past few months;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the reasons for increase in bird hits accidents of aircrafts have been ascertained;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by Government to check such rising accidents of aircraft due to bird hits?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) There has been a marginal increase in bird hit incidents. While there have been 251 cases of bird hits reported in 2008 as against 217 in 2007, in Delhi, the number of bird hits incidents reported this year is 39 as against 30 in 2007.

(c) and (d) The sources of bird attraction are major construction activities in and around aerodrome, grass inside the airport, slum clusters, garbage dump and illegal abattoirs in the vicinity of the airport, slaughter houses, garbage dumping in the uncovered bins, poor garbage disposal and non-timely removal, unauthorized piggeries, dairy farms and slums, water stagnation, landfill area etc.

(e) Airfield Environment Management Committees have been constituted at those airports where scheduled flights operate to identify the sources of bird attraction and take remedial steps for prevention of such incidents. Various specific steps such as proper disposal of garbage, prevention of water logging, coverage of garbage bins, establishment of modern abattoirs, scaring of birds etc. have also been taken to reduce the incidence of bird hits.

Discontinuation of international flights from Guwahati

2333. SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for discontinuation of the international flights to and from Guwahati;

(b) whether his Ministry has made proper assessment about the deficiency in infrastructure, visa facilities and policy guidelines deterring the airlines to fly to and from Guwahati;

(c) if so, the details of the findings thereof and the action taken by Government to remove such deficiencies; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) At present, Guwahati is available as point of call to the designated airlines of 10 foreign countries. However, actual operations by any airline is always guided by its commercial judgement. Air India had commenced operations on Guwahati-Gangtok route which was later discontinued due to poor load factor.

(b) Taking into consideration, the present traffic at Guwahati airports, the existing infrastructure provided in terminal building can handle both international as well as domestic operations.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Contractual workers engaged by Air India

2334. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state: